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Whitchurch, Hants,  
Rural District Council



REPORT

OF THE  
Medical Officer of Health

FOR THE YEAR 1920.

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Rural District of Whitchurch, Hants.

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# Annual Report

For the year ended Dec. 31, 1920.

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TO THE WHITCHURCH (HANTS) RURAL  
DISTRICT COUNCIL.

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GENTLEMEN,—

I beg to submit my ANNUAL REPORT for the year 1920, copies of which have been forwarded to the Ministry of Health, the Home Office, and Hants County Council.

**PHYSICAL FEATURES.** — The District consists of Whitchurch, Overton and St. Mary Bourne, with various adjoining parishes and hamlets. Whilst much of the district is situated in the valleys of the Test and Bourne, a considerable portion is hilly and in parts well wooded. There are a number of water meadows and watercress beds. The Test is noted for its Trout Fishing.

**SOIL.**—The soil is chiefly chalk, with some gravel and light loam. The occupation of the inhabitants is mainly agricultural. A number find employment at a Jam Factory, Paper Mill, and a small Silk Mill. None of these occupations appear to have any particular influence on public health.

The Population at the Census of 1911 was 6121, and estimated 1920 at 6246.

The Area is 30,609 acres.

**REGISTERED BIRTHS.**

	1919.	1920.
Whitchurch Division .....	59	77
Overton Division .....	36	41
St. Mary Bourne Division .....	24	27
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Total .....	119	145
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**DEATHS.**

	1919.	1920.
Whitchurch Division .....	32	30
Overton Division .....	14	21
St. Mary Bourne Division .....	14	11
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Total .....	60	62
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**DEATHS OF INFANTS UNDER ONE YEAR OF AGE.**

	1919.	1920.
Whitchurch Division .....	4	7
Overton Division .....	4	3
St. Mary Bourne Division .....	1	1
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total .....	9	11
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**DEATHS IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS WITHIN THE DISTRICT.**

	1919.	1920.
Whitchurch Poor Law Institution		
Infirmary .....	11	6
Whitchurch Isolation Hospital....	0	0
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total .....	11	6
	<hr/>	<hr/>

**DEATHS IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS BEYOND THE DISTRICT.**

1919.	1920.
13	13

## NETT DEATH RATE FOR THE WHOLE DISTRICT.

	1919.	1920.
General (Nett) .....	12.1	11.8

## BIRTH RATE (NETT) PER 1000 OF THE POPULATION.

	1919.	1920.
	21.2	27.2
		1920.
Illegitimate Births .....		16

**AMOUNT OF POOR LAW RELIEF.**—The sum of £544 was disbursed in the form of out-relief by the Poor Law Guardians during the year 1920. I understand that there is no fixed scale of out-relief in force in the Union, and in dealing with applications for relief each case is considered on its merits, and where destitution is found to exist adequate relief is given.

**EXTENT TO WHICH HOSPITAL AND OTHER FORMS OF GRATUITOUS MEDICAL RELIEF ARE UTILISED.** Certain infectious diseases are treated at the Whitchurch Isolation Hospital. Most of the medical and surgical cases that require hospital treatment go to the Royal Hants County Hospital, Winchester. There are, however, an increasing number of cases which are treated at the Poor Law Institution, Whitchurch, especially those where the home surroundings are unsuitable, and which require nursing. Many of these are chronic cases, which are not suitable for a general hospital.

## SANITARY CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE DISTRICT.

**WATER.**—There is a sufficiency of water in the district, and the quality is on the whole good. The source is entirely from wells or tubes, the wells vary in depth from 28ft. to 106ft., and the tubes from 10 to 30ft. Occasionally some of these wells—many of which are very old—have been found to be contaminated and have either been cleaned out or filled in and replaced by a tube. During the year action was taken in respect of water that was found unfit for drinking from wells in the Lynch, Whitchurch, and which formed the subject of a report on the water supply of the Lynch.

Here five wells were found contaminated :

Closed.... 1      New Tubes, &c..... 3      Cleaned out 2

**RIVERS AND STREAMS.**—The Test and the Bourne run through parts of the District and waste water, including urine, which is thrown down, is carried by channels in some cases to the river. Also a certain amount of household refuse is thrown into the river.

**DRAINAGE AND SEWERAGE.**—No water carriage system exists. Surface water is carried in channels to the river.

**CLOSET ACCOMMODATION.**—The night soil is dealt with either by the pail system in the case of the smaller houses and cottages and by cemented cesspits in the case of the larger houses ; until a water carriage system exists there will always be the possibility of wells becoming infected from leaking cesspits. No provision is made for cleansing the pails.

**SCAVENGING.**—The house refuse is removed by the Scavenger in Whitchurch and Overton twice a week ; movable ashbins with proper coverings are used in a few cases, and should be made compulsory, too often an old box or tin without any cover is used, and the contents are scattered.

**SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE DISTRICT.** — In Table V. will be found information under this head.

**PREMISES AND OCCUPATIONS** which can be controlled by Bye-Laws and Regulations :—

Jam Factory	Laundry
Silk Mill	Knacker's Yard
Paper Mill	Slaughterhouses

**SCHOOLS (ELEMENTARY).**—The sanitary condition and water supply of the six Elementary Schools in the District are



satisfactory. The following schools were closed during the year :  
 Whitchurch Infants, Oct. 26-Nov. 5—Whooping Cough  
 Overton Infants, Oct. 26-Nov. 5—Measles  
 Laverstoke, Dec. 10-Dec. 23—Chicken Pox

## FOOD.

**MILK SUPPLY.**—On the whole the quality of the Milk produced within the District is satisfactory. I received one report from the County Medical Officer of Health of dirty milk from a farm at Overton. I inspected the cows and found them clean, and the milk was inspected from the cart whilst being delivered and also found to be free from foreign matter.

**MEAT.**—Meat is inspected at the shops and at the slaughterhouses. The condition of the slaughterhouses is satisfactory, the necessary limewashing and cleansing being done. No public abattoir exists ; there are two slaughterhouses in Overton and one in Whitchurch. No carcasses or parts of carcasses were condemned for tuberculosis.

	In 1914.	In Jan., 1920.	In Dec., 1920
Slaughterhouses .....	6	3	3

**OTHER FOODS.**—Unsound Food and Food Inspection:—During the year various inspections have been carried out and certain articles found to be unfit for human consumption were condemned, among these being 50lb. of bacon and 14½ hams. The vendor of the hams was subsequently prosecuted and fined £20 and costs.

**FOOD AND DRUGS ACT.**—During the year the following samples were analysed and found to be genuine :—

Butter .....	1	New Milk.....	7
Cheese .....	1	Shredded Suet .....	1
Ground Ginger .....	1	Pepper .....	3
Lard .....	2	Tea .....	1
Malt Vinegar .....	1	Dripping .....	2

The following samples were found to be adulterated :—

New Milk.....	2
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**INFECTIOUS DISEASE GENERALLY.**—There were a number of cases of Diphtheria, Influenzal Pneumonia, and Pneumonia notified during the year.

In January, 1920, whilst cases of sore throat were prevalent, a youth was found to have Diphtheria. He had worked for just over a week at the same Mills as the last case of Diphtheria notified in 1919 a few weeks earlier, but not in the same department. The rest of the family, eight in number, were swabbed, and three members found to have Diphtheria Bacilli present in their throats. They were all removed to the Isolation Hospital. The house was in a sanitary condition, and there was no evidence to show where the first patient acquired the disease—the three other members who contracted it undoubtedly acquired it from this first case—the one who had the worst throat had been sleeping in the same bed with his brother.

I then took swabs of one hundred children at the Whitchurch Mixed School, and all these were found to be negative. Also I took one hundred and twenty-eight swabs at the Whitchurch Infant School, and two of these came back positive. These two children were removed to the Isolation Hospital, also one other child from Whitchurch. Three months later five other cases arose in Whitchurch and were removed to hospital—four of these cases were a good deal in contact with one another, but the fifth case was not. They all made a good recovery. No cause was found; the houses were inspected and found to be satisfactory. A case at Overton in December was probably contracted at School. He was treated at home.

**INFLUENZA** was prevalent during February, March and April at Whitchurch. Many of the cases complained of epistaxis and a number of them developed pneumonia. In September there were a number of cases of influenza at Whitchurch with several cases of pneumonia as a complication.

During October **WHOOPING COUGH** was prevalent at Whitchurch. It was noted that during February and March at Whitchurch violent coughs, both in children and adults, and resembling whooping coughs, occurred; there was little expectoration.



There were some cases of **CHICKEN POX** in Whitchurch in July, and at Freefolk and Laverstoke in December.

**MEASLES** was almost absent from the District until October when a number of cases occurred at Overton.

A case of **TYPHOID FEVER** was notified in September at Whitchurch. This occurred in a girl who had not been away from her home at Whitchurch for months, and neither before nor subsequently was there any case of illness in the house. This was the more remarkable, as the water from the well—a tube well—was found to contain typhoid baccilli, and this well supplied four cottages. A lot of waste water was often thrown down near the side of the house and some of this may have reached the well—with the object of finding out if any person living near was a carrier about two dozen specimens of urine and foeces were taken and sent to the laboratory at Winchester for examination. These were found to be negative. One of these people had suffered from typhoid fever in the past.

Water was taken from various wells in the vicinity and analysed. Four of these samples were found to be unfit for domestic purposes. In consequence of this three new tube wells were sunk, and the fourth well was cleaned out.

Dealing with this contamination of wells in my special report on the water supply of the Lynch, I said “ I am inclined to think that the lack of a general system for carrying away waste water, which includes urine, combined with the practice of throwing a good deal of slop water on the ground near the dwellings, has led to a wide-spread contamination of the soil—fissures in the chalk, which is in some cases covered only by a few inches of earth, may have had something to do in helping the contamination.” “ In years gone by there were no doubt a number of cess-pits in this part, and leaks from these might easily pollute water supplies.”

The patient with Typhoid Fever was treated at the Isolation Hospital, and after a severe illness recovered from the Typhoid Fever, but developed Pulmonary Tuberculosis and eventually was sent to a Sanatorium.

**DIPHThERIA ANTI-TOXIN.**—This is provided by the Rural District Council, and can be obtained by the Medical Practitioners through the Medical Officer of Health.

No case of **ENCEPHALITIS LETHARGICA** was notified during the year, nor of **DYSENTERY** or **TRENCH FEVER**. One case of **MALARIA** was notified ; this was in a demobilised soldier and was not very severe.

No primary Vaccinations or Re-vaccinations were performed by the Medical Officer of Health under the Public Health (Small Pox Prevention) Regulations, 1917. With regard to the cleansing and disinfection of verminous persons and their belongings the facilities available are scanty, and practically the only cases dealt with are those that go into the Whitchurch Poor Law Institution.

On Table V. is a summary of the work done by the Inspector of Nuisances, who has given me all the help possible.

I am, Gentlemen,

Yours faithfully,

**F. A. COATES,**

Medical Officer of Health.

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## HOUSING.

### (1.) *General Housing Conditions in the District—*

(1)—General-housing conditions : On the whole good.

(2)—(a) Extent of shortage or excess of houses :

Extent of shortage, 50.

(b)—Measures taken or contemplated to meet any shortage ; Fifty houses to be built by R.D.C. and 27 privately.

(3) Information as to any important changes in population anticipated in the future : Slight increase probable.

(II.) *Overcrowding* :—

- (1)—Extent: A certain number of cases are known to exist.
- (2)—Causes: Shortage of houses and young people getting married.
- (3) Measures taken or contemplated for dealing with overcrowding: House building.
- (3) Principal cases of overcrowding during the year, and action taken: Nil.

(III.) *Fitness of Houses* :—

- (1)—(a) General standard of housing in the district: Good.
- (b) General character of the defects found to exist in unfit houses: Dampness and general decay.
- (c) How far defects are due to the lack of proper management and supervision by owners: During the war shortage of workmen.
- (2) General action taken as regards unfit houses under—
  - (a) The Public Health Acts: (b) The Housing Acts:No houses closed, but several considerably improved.

(IV.) *Unhealthy Areas* :—

Information as to complaints received or representations made and action taken in regard to unhealthy areas, under Part I. or Part II. of the Housing Act of 1890: Nil.

(V.) *Bye-laws relating to houses, to houses let in lodgings, and to tents, vans, sheds, etc.* :—

- (1) As to working of existing bye-laws: Nil.
- (2) As to need for new bye-laws or revision of existing bye-laws: Nil.

(VI.) *General and Miscellaneous.*

Generally, an account of any action bearing on the public health, not covered by the above particulars, which has been taken during the year by the local authority in connection with overcrowding, insanitary property, and housing, whether under the Housing Acts or the Public Health Acts: No action taken.

## HOUSING CONDITIONS.

STATISTICS. Year ended 31st December, 1920.

### 1.—GENERAL.

- (1) Estimated population—6246
- (2) General death-rate—11.8
- (3) Death-rate from Tuberculosis—1.1
- (4) Infantile mortality—64.7 per 1000 nett births
- (5) Number of dwelling-houses of all classes—1484
- (6) Number of working class dwelling-houses—About 1200
- (7) Number of new working class houses erected—7

### 2.—UNFIT DWELLING-HOUSES.

#### *I.—Inspection.*

- (1) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)—24
- (2) Number of dwelling-houses which were inspected and recorded under the Housing (Inspection of District) Regulations, 1910—8
- (3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation—Nil.
- (4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-heading) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation—8

#### *I I.—Remedy of Defects without Service of Formal Notices.*

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers—8

#### *I I I.—Action under Statutory Powers.*

A. *Proceedings under Section 28 of the Housing, Town Planning, Etc., Act, 1919.*

- (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs—Nil.
- (2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit—  
(a) by owners—8 ; (b) by Local Authority in default of owners—Nil.

- (3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close—Nil.

B. *Proceedings under Public Health Acts.*

- (1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied—Nil.
- (2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied—(a) by owners—Nil ; (b) by Local Authority in default of owners—Nil.

C. *Proceedings under Sections 17 and 18 of the Housing, Town Planning, Etc., Act, 1909.*

- (1) Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders—Nil.
- (2) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made—Nil.
- (3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling-houses having been rendered fit—Nil.
- (4) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which demolition Orders were made—Nil.
- (5) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders—Nil.

3.—UNHEALTHY AREAS.

Areas represented to the Local Authority with a view to Improvement Schemes, under (a), Part I., or (b), Part II., of the Act of 1890 :—

- (1) Name of area—Nil.
- (2) Acreage—Nil.
- (3) Number of working-class houses in area—Nil.
- (4) Number of working-class persons to be displaced—Nil.

4.—Number of houses not complying with the building bye-laws erected with consent of Local Authority under Section 25 of the Housing, Town Planning, &c., Act, 1919—Nil.

5.—Staff engaged on housing work with, briefly, the duties of each officer—Nil.



**TABLE I.—Vital Statistics of whole District during 1920 and Previous Years.**  
**WHITCHURCH (HANTS) RURAL DISTRICT.**

YEAR.	Population estimated to middle of each year.	BIRTHS.				TOTAL DEATHS REGISTERED IN THE DISTRICT.		TRANSFERABLE DEATHS.		NETT DEATHS BELONGING TO THE DISTRICT.			
		Un-corrected Number.	NETT.		Number.	Rate.	of Non-residents registered in the District.	of Residents not registered in the District.	Under 1 Year of Age.		At all Ages.		
			Number.	Rate.					Number.	Rate per 1000 Net Births	Number.	Rate.	
													4
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	
1915	6079	134	135	22.2	88	14.4	4	8	9	66.6	92	15.1	
1916	6079	115	114	18.7	63	10.3	...	9	7	51.8	72	11.8	
1917	6079	112	114	18.7	65	10.6	...	14	5	43.8	79	12.9	
1918	6079	119	123	20.2	81	13.3	...	9	9	73.1	90	14.8	
1919	6079	119	129	21.2	60	9.8	1	15	9	69.7	74	12.1	
1920	6246	145	170	27.2	62	9.9	1	13	11	64.7	74	11.8	

Area of District in Acres (exclusive of area covered by water)—30,609. Total population at all ages—6,246.  
 Number of inhabited houses 1480. Average number of persons per house 4.2.



**TABLE II.—Cases of Infectious Disease Notified during the Year 1920.**  
**WHITCHURCH (HANTS) RURAL DISTRICT.**

NOTIFIABLE DISEASE.	NUMBER OF CASES NOTIFIED.							TOTAL CASES NOTIFIED IN EACH LOCALITY.			Total Cases removed to Hospital
	At all Ages.	At Ages—Years.						Whitchurch.	Overton.	St. Mary Bourne.	
		Under 1.	1 and under 5.	5 and under 15.	15 and under 25.	25 and under 45.	45 and under 65.				
Malaria ...	1	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	...	...
Diphtheria (Including Membranous Group)	13	...	1	9	3	...	...	12	1	...	12
Erysipelas ...	5	...	...	...	1	1	2	4	...	1	...
Influenza Pneumonia	14	...	2	1	5	4	...	14	...	...	...
Pneumonia ...	10	...	...	...	1	4	3	8	2	...	...
Ophthalmia		...									
Neonatorum	3	3	...	...	...	...	...	2	...	1	...
Typhoid Fever	1	...	...	...	1	...	...	1	...	...	...
Pulmonary		...	...	...	...	...	...				
Tuberculosis	8	...	...	1	3	4	...	7	...	1	...
Other forms of Tuberculosis	2	...	...	1	1	...	...	2	...	...	...
Totals ...	57	3	3	12	15	14	5	51	3	3	13

Isolation Hospital.—Whitchurch (Hants), provided by Rural District Council.  
 Number of Diseases that can be concurrently treated, 2.

Total available Beds, 12.

**TABLE III.—Causes of Death during  
Year 1920.**

WHITCHURCH (HANTS) RURAL DISTRICT.

CAUSES OF DEATH. Civilians only.	Males.	Females.
All causes ... ..	41	33
Whooping Cough ... ..	...	1
Influenza ... ..	2	3
Pulmonary Tuberculosis ...	1	4
Tuberculous meningitis ...	1	...
Other Tuberculous diseases	1	...
Cancer, malignant disease ...	9	3
Organic heart disease ...	7	10
Bronchitis ... ..	3	1
Pneumonia (all forms) ...	4	1
Other Respiratory diseases ...	...	1
Diarrhoea, &c. (under 2 years)	1	...
Parturition, apart from puerperal fever	...	1
Congenital debility, &c. ...	3	1
Violence, apart from suicide...	4	...
Other defined diseases ...	5	7
Deaths of infants under 1 year of age ... ..	9	2
Illegitimate ... ..		
Total births ... ..	95	75
Legitimate ... ..	87	67
Illegitimate ... ..	8	8
Population for births & deaths	6,246	

**TABLE IV.—Infant Mortality during the Year 1920.**

Deaths from stated causes at various Ages under One Year of Age.

WHITCHURCH (HANTS) RURAL DISTRICT.

CAUSE OF DEATH.	Under 1 week.	1—2 Weeks.	2—3 Weeks.	3—4 Weeks.	Total under 4 weeks.	1—3 Months.	3—6 Months.	6—9 Months.	9—12 Months.	Total Deaths under One Year.
ALL CAUSES—										
Certified ...	2	...	1	...	...	2	2	3	1	11
Uncertified ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Bronchitis ...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1	...	2
Convulsions ...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	...	1
Marasmus ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1
Pneumonia (all forms) ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	1	...	2
Malnutrition ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	1
Pertussis... ..	...	...	...	...	...	...	1	...	...	1
Premature Birth ...	2	...	1	...	...	...	...	...	...	3
Totals	2	...	1	...	...	2	2	3	1	11

Births in the Year :—Legitimate, 154 ; Illegitimate, 16.

Deaths in the Year :—Legitimate, 11 ; Illegitimate, Nil.

**TABLE V.—Summary of Sanitary Work done in the Inspector of Nuisances' Department during the Year 1920.**  
**WHITCHURCH (HANTS) RURAL DISTRICT.**

	NUMBER OF		ABATEMENT NOTICES.		NUISANCES ABATED AFTER NOTICES BY		NUISANCE REMAINING UNABATED.
	Inspections and Observations made.	Defects found.	Informal by Inspector.	Formal by Authority.	Inspector.	Authority.	
Dwelling-houses { Foul Conditions ...	1	1	1	1	8	1	...
and { Structural Defects ...	8	8	8	...	...	...	...
Schools { Over-crowding ...	2	1	1	1	1	1	...
Lodging-houses { Unfit for Habitation...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Dairies and Milkshops ...	14	1	1	...	1	...	...
Cowsheds ...	14	1	1	...	1	...	...
Bakehouses ...	7	...	...	...	...	...	...
Slaughter-houses ...	3	1	1	...	1	...	...
Canal Boats ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Ashpits and Privies ...	4	2	2	...	2	...	...
Deposits of Refuse and Manure	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Water-closets ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
House { Defective Traps ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Drainage { No Disconnection ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Water Supply ...	20	19	1	...	1	...	...
Pigsties ...	6	1	1	...	1	...	...
Animals improperly kept ...	1	1	1	...	1	...	...
Offensive Trades ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Smoke Nuisances ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Other Nuisances ...	...	...	...	...	...	...	...
Totals ...	80	36	18	2	17	2	...

Complaints received, 4. Houses disinfected after infectious disease, 18.  
 No. of cases admitted to Isolation, Diphtheria, 12; Typhoid, 1—13.

TABLE 5—continued.

## HOUSING AND TOWN PLANNING ACT.

### INSPECTION OF HOUSES.

Is there any scarcity of houses, and where?—

Whitchurch, Overton and St. Mary Bourne.

Number of new houses built in 1920—7.

General character—Working Class Dwellings.

Any Town Planning Scheme contemplated?—Yes.

Who has been designated as the Inspecting Officer under Article II. of the Housing Regulations, 1910?—

W. J. Hiscox, Inspector of Nuisances.

Are records submitted to L.A. at each meeting?—

In advance.

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Houses inspected	...	...	...	...	24
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#### Section 17—

Dwelling-houses found unfit for human habitation	...	—
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Representations made	..	...	...	—
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Closing Order made	...	...	...	—
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Houses made habitable without closing orders	...	8
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Houses made habitable as result of closing orders	...	—
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Houses demolished	...	...	...	—
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Houses unfit but still occupied	...	...	...	—
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#### Section 15—

Defects reported	...	...	...	—
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Defects remedied	...	...	...	—
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Notices served	...	...	...	—
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# RURAL DISTRICT OF WHITCHURCH (HANTS).

Annual Report of the Medical Officer of Health for the Year 1920 on the Administration of the Factory and Workshop Act, 1901, in connection with Factories, Workshops, Workplaces and Homework.

1.—INSPECTION.		2.—DEFECTS FOUND.	
Factories (including Factory Laundries) ...	29	Nuisances under the Public Health Acts—	
Workshops (including Workshop Laundries) 9		<i>Nil.</i>	
Workplaces ... ..	12	(Offences under the Factory & Workshop Acts—	
		<i>Nil.</i>	
Total ... ..	50		

## 3.—HOME WORK.—*Nil.*

4.—REGISTERED WORKSHOPS. Workshops on the Register at the end of the year—9

5.—OTHER MATTERS.—Matters notified to H.M. Inspector of Factories :—*Nil.*

Underground Bakehouses—*Nil.*





